1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

854 During the early years of life children are left to the care
853 of the women of the household and, in poorer families, are carried about on their mothers' backs to the fields or the market place, until they are old enough to walk by themselves. As is also the case in other parts of China, where the use of cow's milk is unknown, weaning does not take place till a child is three years old or more, and the change to a rice diet often brings digestive troubles and ill-health. The Min Chia, who do use cow's milk, do not seem to know how to make use of it for feeding young children. As soon as the child is weaned it is given the same food as adults—rice, vegetables and fish or meat in small quantities—while the milk which would be more suitable in plain dishes is made into cheese. Infant mortality, already very high on account of the unchecked epidemics of measles, scarlet fever and typhoid, is largely increased by digestive disorders due to the change to unsuitable diet.

851 Once a child, especially a boy, has got over this difficult period it has a happy life, for the Min Chia are extremely affectionate to children, who, within reason, are allowed to do much as they like. As might be expected under these circumstances the children end by doing something which is very annoying or mischievous, and their enraged parents then chastise them On such occasions the outcry made by boy or girl might suggest that they were being beaten to death, but this is largely a conventional manifestation of grief rather than of pain, for it would be considered most unfilial and almost indecent for a child to bear punishment with fortitude; this would seem to the Min Chia not a proof of pluck, but a display of obstinacy and sulkiness. Consequently the child howls its loudest and the parent, satisfied by this evidence of contrition, is rarely very severe.

850 Min Chia children have quite a large variety of toys, all